

# GOOD NEIGHBOR NEWS



Spring - 2012

## Preventing bicycle theft

As we become less dependent on our vehicles and more dependent on other modes of transportation, it is necessary to think about bicycle theft prevention. Bicycle theft is not just a college town issue but a growing trend in most cities. Here are some theft prevention tips:

Do not leave bicycles unsecured in yards, carports, front porches or even garages. Unsecured and unattended property creates an opportunity for crime.

Store bicycles in garages or other areas where they cannot be viewed from outside, even if it means bringing the bicycle inside the house.

Don't leave bicycles unattended on vehicle racks, in truck beds or in unsecured vehicles.

When out and about, look for "M" bicycle stands. "M" bicycle stands provide the best locking opportunities.



Do not "flypark" your bicycle. Flyparking means locking your bicycle to trees and other objects, and not bicycle racks. This common practice can contribute to bicycle theft as bicycles are less secure than when locked to a bicycle rack. At times, bicycles can be lifted up and over the object, or the object can be removed to free the bicycle.

Secure your bicycle in areas with good surveillance. Leaving your bicycle unattended in low traffic areas creates a greater opportunity for theft.

Lock your bicycle with two different types of locks. Two different locks would require two different cutting tools. A good example is a D lock and a chain. This would require levering, cutting or striking to free the bicycle.



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Examples of locks are:

- D or U lock—The lock's strength depends on materials and quality. Such locks can be vulnerable to levering but are resistant to cutting.
- Cable or coil lock—A many stranded steel cable enclosed in plastic. Cables are vulnerable to cutting and can be severed with available hand tools.
- Chain lock—A length of chain and a padlock or mini-D lock. The chain strength depends on the material and quality and the lock can be vulnerable to striking. Poor quality chains are vulnerable to bolt cutters and other cutting tools.
- Armored cable lock—Armored cables can be hardy but again, it depends on the material or quality. Armored cables can be vulnerable to bolt cutters and other cutting tools.

Secure each lock to a separate wheel and the frame. Remove all removable parts. This includes baskets, bags and other property that will be left unattended.



Engrave your bicycle with your California drivers' license number. The police department recovers many bicycles but does not know to whom the bicycle belongs. This will help the police department to return your bicycle to you.

Record your bicycle's make, model and serial number. The serial number is one unique aspect of your bicycle. Knowing the serial number also helps the police department identify which bicycle is yours.

A little prevention goes a long way toward securing your property. Take the time to prevent crime and keep Carlsbad safe.



## Protecting your child's Social Security number

Anyone with a Social Security number assigned to them is at risk for identity theft. Because Social Security numbers are commonly assigned to children at a very young age, even newborn children are at risk for identity theft. In fact, children are more likely to be

a victim of identity theft than an adult.

Parents should check their child's Social Security number for identity theft starting when they're young, so you can identify signs of fraud and work to clean up their record. If you wait until the child is older, the fraud could impact their ability to get a job, apply for school loans, or get a mobile phone or apartment. Ignoring the problem will not make it go away. It will just make it bigger.

One of the first signals that a child may be a victim of identity theft is receiving pre-approved credit offers in the mail. If your child ever receives offers like this, you need to further investigate to see if your child is a victim. Criminals find child Social Security numbers extremely valuable because the crime can be difficult to detect. In addition, friends and family using a child's Social Security

number is a leading case of child identity theft. Here are some prevention tips:

1. Keep your child's social security card and other important documents in a safe or safety deposit box, and do not travel with the card.
2. Don't give out your child's social security number. If someone asks for the number, determine the need and validity of the party asking for the number.
3. Monitor your child's online social networking sites. Make sure private information like date of birth, address, and names of family members are not included in profiles. It's also a good idea

*Does your child receive pre-approved credit card offers in the mail?*

to set privacy settings so your child's profile can only be viewed by

friends and family.

4. Contact the three credit reporting agencies for a free Minor Child Credit Check.
5. Determine if your child has credit. The Minor Child Credit Check will determine if credit has been established. Take action to clear your child's credit report.
6. Contact the Federal Trade Commission, the Internal Revenue Service and Internet Crime Complaint Center and get assistance to report the identity theft.
7. Consider enrolling in an identity theft protection program like FamilySecure or LifeLock.



## Defending your passwords

*Cyber security is a shared responsibility*

Think about the number of personal identification numbers (PINs), passwords, or passphrases you use every day. Keeping track of all of the number, letter, and word combinations may be frustrating at times, and maybe you've wondered if all of the fuss is worth it.

Often an attack is not specifically about your account, but about using the access to your information to launch a larger attack. Think of the implications of an attacker gaining access to your social security number or your medical records. Choosing a strong password helps to protect your identity.

Most people use passwords that are based on personal information and are easy to remember. However, that also makes it easier for an attacker to guess or "crack" your password. Consider a four-digit PIN number. Is yours a combination of the month, day, or year of your birthday; or the last four digits of your social security number; or your address or phone number? Think about how easily it is to find this information out about you.

Your best defense is to use a combination of numbers, special characters, and both lowercase and capital letters. Once you have created a strong password, don't assume you should use it for every system or program you log into. If an attacker does guess it, he would have access to all of your accounts. You should develop unique passwords for each of your accounts.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Police media contact--Jodee Sasway  
760-931-2105 or [jodee.sasway@carlsbadca.gov](mailto:jodee.sasway@carlsbadca.gov)  
Police emergency--911  
Police non-emergency--760-931-2197  
[www.carlsbadca.gov/police](http://www.carlsbadca.gov/police)  
[www.carlsbadca.gov/crime-prevention](http://www.carlsbadca.gov/crime-prevention)